



United States Attorney's Office  
District of Columbia

Ronald C. Machen Jr.  
United States Attorney

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## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **DISTRICT MAN FOUND GUILTY OF VICIOUS ASSAULT AND OF OBSTRUCTING JUSTICE**

*– Man slashed from mouth to ear at Shell Gas Station–*

WASHINGTON - A 49-year-old District man, Terence Bethea, was found guilty yesterday, Wednesday, May 26, 2010, of Aggravated Assault while Armed and two counts of Obstruction of Justice in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced today. The case stemmed from a brutal assault that occurred last summer at the Shell Gas Station near the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and Newton Street, NE.

According to evidence introduced at trial, on July 30, 2009, the victim walked up to Defendant Bethea to ask him for thirty dollars that the Defendant owed to the victim's friend. Set against a history of hatred for the victim, the Defendant took offense at the request. The two got into an argument, during which the Defendant pulled a drywall knife from his pocket and cut the victim from the corner of his mouth clean through to the back of his neck. The Defendant caused several other lacerations to the victim's face, and ultimately buried his knife in the victim's temple, reaching his skull.

During his incarceration pending trial, the defendant wrote multiple letters to a witness, asking the witness to round up people from the neighborhood to testify falsely on his behalf. The letters included a script from which he wanted all of his witnesses to testify, providing a story that tells the witnesses to claim that it was an unidentified teenager, not him, who had slashed the victim's face. In the letters, the Defendant offered forty dollars to each person that would testify consistently with his script.

After a day of deliberations, a jury found Defendant Bethea guilty of Aggravated Assault while Armed, Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, Assault with Significant Bodily Injury and two counts of Obstruction of Justice. Bethea faces a maximum sentence of 30 years' incarceration on each charge when he is sentenced on September 3, 2010, by D.C. Superior Court Judge Russell F. Canan.

In announcing the conviction, U.S. Attorney Machen commended MPD Investigators William Talbert and Dino McFadden of the Fifth District Criminal Investigation Division, as

well as MPD Officers Phokam Vongkeo, Christopher Henry, Jaron Hickman, and Jonathan Wright. U.S. Attorney Machen also expressed his appreciation to paralegal Kalisha Johnson-Clark, Litigation Support Specialist Joshua Ellen, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Chris Kavanaugh, who investigated, indicted, and tried the case.

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